United Nations A/73/82

General Assembly

Distr.: General
27 April 2018

Original: English

Seventy-third session
Item 114 (d) of the preliminary list*
Elections to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other elections: election of members of the Human Rights Council

Letter dated 23 April 2018 from the Permanent Representative of Czechia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

With reference to the candidature of the Czech Republic to the Human Rights Council for the period 2019–2021 and, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 60/251 of 15 March 2006, I have the honour to transmit herewith the voluntary pledges and commitments of the Czech Republic for its candidature to the Council (see annex).

The Czech Republic, as a State party to all major human rights treaties, is fully committed to the promotion and protection of human rights at the national and international levels. As a member of the Human Rights Council during the periods 2006–2007 and 2011–2014, the Czech Republic actively and constructively contributed to advancing the human rights agenda. It stands ready to further impart that approach to the work of the Council.

(*Signed*) Marie **Chatardová**

* A/73/50.

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Annex to the letter dated 23 April 2018 from the Permanent Representative of Czechia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

Candidature of Czechia to the Human Rights Council, 2019–2021

Voluntary pledges and commitments pursuant to General Assembly resolution 60/251

The Government of the Czech Republic pledges to work for the promotion and protection of human rights during its future membership of the Human Rights Council through the following voluntary commitments:

At the international level

- As a member of the Human Rights Council, the Czech Republic will draw on and offer its unique experience of having made the transition to an open and democratic State based on the rule of law and respect for human rights.
- The Czech Republic will work for the advancement of human rights in international human rights forums. We will actively participate in the work of the Human Rights Council, with a view to further enhancing its credibility and efficiency. The Czech Republic attaches great importance to the role of prevention and therefore will support an adequate and timely response to human rights violations and abuses wherever they occur. We will speak openly on both country-specific and thematic issues, in particular those requiring the urgent action of the Council.
- During deliberations of the Human Rights Council, the Czech Republic will collaborate in a transparent manner and in good faith with all States from all regions, as well as with civil society. The Czech Republic will promote freedom of expression and information as a gateway to the enjoyment of a wider range of human rights, including freedom of assembly and of association.
- We will continue to cooperate closely with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, to advocate its independence and impartiality and to make voluntary financial contributions to it.
- The Czech Republic will continue its support for the international human rights mechanisms. We will continue to cooperate fully with all the Council's special procedures, to which the Czech Republic issued a standing invitation in September 2000 as one of the first Members of the United Nations, and we stand ready to respond rapidly to any requests for visits. We will continue to submit our national reports to the human rights treaty bodies in a timely manner and to follow up on their recommendations. We will continue to participate actively in universal periodic review dialogues and to offer recommendations to States.
- The Czech Republic will continue to strongly support equal participation in political and public affairs and free and enabling space for civil society. We will also continue to strongly support the engagement of non-governmental organizations with the Human Rights Council and to speak out against any acts of intimidation or reprisal against persons who seek to cooperate, are cooperating or have cooperated with human rights mechanisms.
- We will continue to contribute, through development cooperation and transition promotion policy projects that are fully in line with the Sustainable

Development Goals, to the support for and protection of human rights, the rule of law, democracy and good governance in partner countries.

- The Czech Republic will continue to support the building of institutions that promote the rule of law, including through activities aimed at combating torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

At the national level

- We pledge to submit a universal periodic review midterm report in 2020 and to report to the Human Rights Council at its fortieth session, in March 2019, on the early implementation of several of the recommendations made in 2017 that it supports.
- We pledge to make effective use of the permanent consultative structures of the Government, such as the Government Council for Human Rights and its working bodies, to ensure continuous dialogue about human rights issues with academia and civil society organizations.
- We pledge to work for the early ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention), as well as for the effective implementation of international human rights treaties at the national level.
- We pledge to continue to promote equality and non-discrimination among the Roma people and to support their social integration, political participation and empowerment, including through the work of the Government Agency for Social Inclusion.
- We pledge to continue to challenge gender stereotypes in society and to create equal opportunities among women and men, including through measures to increase the participation of women in decision-making and politics.
- We pledge to continue to strengthen the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, including through continued support for the effective political participation and employment of persons with disabilities.
- We pledge to further strengthen the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, in particular by protecting children from all forms of violence and ensuring their right to grow up in a family environment.
- We pledge to sensitize Czech businesses, in particular State-owned businesses, to human rights, in particular by promoting dialogue on human rights among businesses, the State, trade unions, academia and civil society.
- We pledge to continue to implement the Sustainable Development Goals and to promote human rights in the context of employment and the environment.